

**Senate Joint Resolution 3 – Testimony Linda J. Anderson-Haines
February 5, 2007**

On behalf of Glacier Country Regional Tourism Commission representing Flathead, Glacier, Lake, Lincoln, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli and Sanders Counties, I am Linda J. Anderson-Haines, Executive Director.

We support SJ Resolution 3 and we urge Montana's legislative delegation to actively support full funding of national parks and support our congressional efforts.

Glacier National Park is truly Montana's National Park and is a timeless treasure.

We would like to submit a recent article in the *Seattle Times* and the *San Jose Journal* –Where did all the Yosemite Folks GO? Fewer people visited Yosemite last year than any time in 16 years. They are down nearly 20% and much closer to larger populations then we are in Montana.

Without support and funding of Glacier National Park in particular, Montana will see a drop in its visitation of National Parks? Ask your communities can they afford to see 20% less visitors!

Each dollar spent enjoying the mountains and forests of a national park in Montana carries 60 times the impact on the state economy versus each dollar spent at national parks in California.

We urge your support of more funding for national parks and encourage you to read a book called "Last Child in the Woods". Without funding and awareness of the national parks, we will see a significant drop in tourism and in business in Montana.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I welcome any questions.

406-837-6211

Where'd all the Yosemite folks go?

San Jose Mercury News

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Yosemite National Park has long been known as a place with stunning waterfalls, dramatic rock formations and frustrating weekend crowds. But all that is changing.

The waterfalls and rocks are still there. A lot of the people aren't.

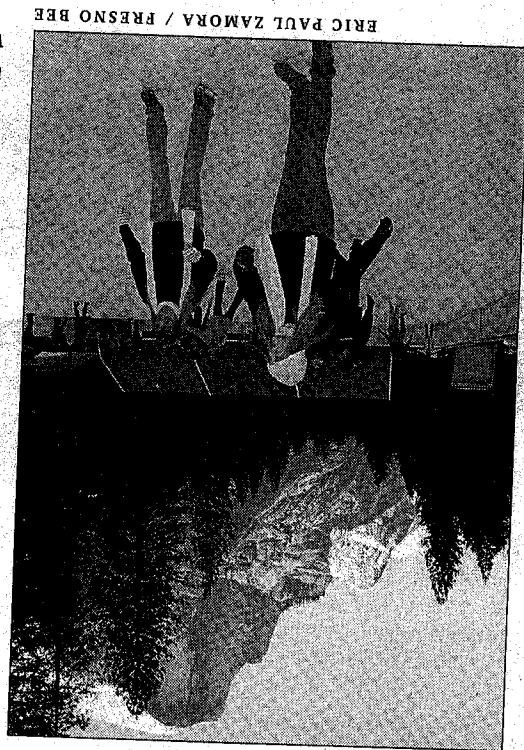
Fewer people visited Yosemite the last year than at any time in the past 16 years, according to park-attendance statistics made public last week. The trend has been under way for a decade — and nobody knows exactly why, although park officials point to busy families, video games and a series of natural disasters.

With 3.36 million visitors in 2006, Yosemite drew nearly 20 percent fewer people than its peak attendance 10 years ago, despite the state adding 7 million people in that span.

"The traffic is less. I'm not seeing the backups that we used to see," said Scott Gediman, a ranger who has worked in Yosemite since 1996. "You don't see crowds of people as much."

Key weekends such as Memorial Day, Labor Day and the Fourth of July remain busy. But increasingly, very crowded days are the exception. A few minutes' walk up a trail from Yosemite Valley can mean solitude. "You can go out on an August day on a Tuesday afternoon

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Alison Kosticky, 14, left and Kelli Taylor, 14, both of Merced, Calif., circle the ice at the Yosemite Outdoor Ice Rink in Yosemite National Park this winter.

and it is more peaceful and quiet now, which is wonderful," Gediman said. "But we'd like here in a couple of years, to come back."

Reasons for the decline have been difficult to pinpoint, but park officials and business leaders from neighboring counties have plenty of theories.

Among them: A series of natural disasters — from a devastating flood in 1997 to a rock-slide this summer that closed one of the park's main roads, Highway 140, from April to August.

"We certainly want parks to be relevant to young people today, and to pass on the preservation ethic," Gediman said. "But there is a different entertainment ethic. Half Dome is competing now with PlayStation and Xbox."

Also, some suggest, many parents are working longer hours and can't get away from e-mails, cellphone calls and the pressures of the office for extended periods. Also, kids have more entertainment options than they used to.

gust — has scared visitors away.